

# THE TEDDY BEAR POST



A NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

## CONSISTENCY

**D**oes your child want to watch the same movie over and over again? Are you tired of reading the same book every single night? Have you memorized every song from their favorite CD? Yes, repetition is the name of the game with young children! They like to know what comes next; Children thrive on routine because it is safe.

Even the things your children complain about and beg you to change - like play time, bedtime and curfew - must be kept consistent for as long as it is age appropriate. As boring as it seems, consistency translates into reliability. Trust me, your child wants to know just how reliable you are.

Of all the things that you maintain constant in your home, perhaps the most important is cause and consequence. As adults we are forced to understand this concept if we want to maintain jobs, secure loans or even avoid jail. It is a good idea to teach your children the importance of abiding laws.

In your home, YOU are responsible for law enforcement! The sooner you and your children understand this, the sooner you will have a peaceful household.

Before you lay down the rules though, there are 3 easy steps you must take:

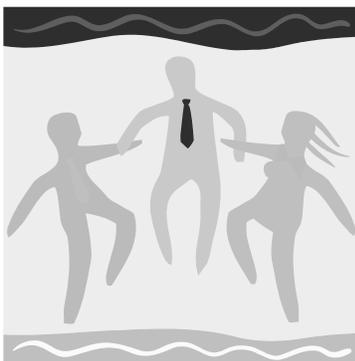
**First**, pick your battles wisely. There are certain things simply not worth fighting about and that varies from family to family. Too many rules become hard to reinforce so choose the ones that are truly important to you. For instance, if your child hates to get up in the morning, an early bedtime may take precedence to eating her vegetables.

**Second**, make sure your children understand what the rules are. Be clear about what they are and are not allowed to do and what the consequences will be should they break these rules.

**Third**, the punishment must fit the crime. If you are unreasonable when establishing cause and consequence you won't be able to be consistent. Telling your child that he can't watch television until he

finishes his homework is perfectly reasonable. Telling your child he can't watch television until he graduates from high school may not be as easy to reinforce.

Once your rules and consequences have been discussed and posted where the children can see them often, the most important thing is to stick to your own words. Your children will test your commitment by pushing their limits and ignoring the rules. Like most parenting issues, this will only work if you lead by example.



Children as young as two can be held responsible for helping to put toys away, bring empty cups to the kitchen and putting their shoes on the proper shelf. Having a job at home promotes a sense of belonging and increases self esteem. Get your children involved as soon as possible and keep your part of the bargain by

being consistent.

**How much stability you should expect from your children is directly related to how much consistency they anticipate from you.**

Whether it is praise or reprimand, your response to their actions should be prompt and unflinching. As children try to figure out the world around them, it is your job to make it easier for them to navigate through the rough spots.

Make sure your children know that they can count on you 100% of the time!

### House Rules Suggestions

We use soft voices when playing inside

Hands are for hugging, not hurting

We take care of our belongings

We are polite to each other

We take turns



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Neil Abercrombie, Governor



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## "A PARENT ASKS"

**Q: What is the best way to discipline my children when we are in public?**



**A:** When your children act out in public you end up in an awkward position; you don't want people around you to think that you are a pushover who allows your kids to misbehave but you also don't want to come off as the out of control parent on isle five.

Here are a few tips on how to avoid turning your trip to the store into a disaster:

Do not wait until you are in public to let your children know what is expected of them. Before you leave the house, don't forget:

- Let your kids know where they are going, what they will be doing and how long it will take.
- Be clear about your rules: No wondering off in the store; Use your inside voice while we shop; Keep your hands to yourself.
- Offer a reward for good behavior: If you follow these rules you will be allowed to have a treat on the way home.
- Explain the consequences: If you break any of these rules there will be no treats.

Once you have laid down the basics, **the real secret will be to follow through with your promises.** Don't hand out treats to screaming children, don't forget to reward good behavior and stick with the time table you designed. By keeping shopping trips short you allow your children a good opportunity to show off some good social skills!

### The Parent Line:

Free statewide phone line for parents and others caring for children. Call for support, encouragement, information, and ideas about handling behavior or about community resources.



Mon- Fri, 8:00am- 6:00pm and Sat,  
9:00am-1:00pm.  
Oahu: **526-1222.**  
Neighbor Islands toll-free:  
**1-800-816-1222**

## SAFETY WORKS!

**Safe Sleep**—Suffocation is the leading cause of fatal injuries among Hawaii infants age 0-12 months. Many sleep-related infant deaths occur from suffocation when infants were sleeping in a face-down position.

### YOU CAN PREVENT SLEEP RELATED DEATHS

- Place infants on their backs to sleep, even for naps
- Place infants to sleep in safety-approved cribs with firm mattresses
- Keep the car and home smoke-free
- Keep pillows, soft comforters, and stuffed toys out of the sleep area
- To prevent overheating: Do not overdress infants when they sleep

For more information, please visit [www.safesleephawaii.org](http://www.safesleephawaii.org)

This information was brought to you by Safe Sleep Hawaii and Hawaii State Department of Health



## Spring Craft Idea

Here's a project that is easy, celebrates nature (April 22nd is Earth Day), the children will enjoy and it makes a great gift on Mother's Day!

### You will need:

- Two different kinds of seeds (beans, tomatoes, etc)
- Plant Soil
- Plastic Spoons
- Egg Cartons



### Instructions:

- Remove the tip from an egg carton. Then, fill each pocket in the egg carton with plant soil.
- Plant the seeds in the 12 pockets. Be creative with patterns!
- Make sure the egg carton gets plenty of light, and water the seeds regularly.
- Enjoy!

## SUGGESTED READING

*March is National Women's History Month!  
Take the chance to teach your children about the amazing contributions that women have made to the world throughout history and remind them that they too can play an important part in our future.*

### **Girls Who Rocked the World**

*By Amelie Welden*

### **You Want Women to Vote, Lizzie Stanton?**

*By Jean Fritz*

### **I Could Do That!**

*By Linda Arms White*

### **The Paper Bag Princess**

*By Robert Munsch*

### **Are You My Mother?**

*By P.D. Eastman*

### **A Mother for Choco**

*By Keiko Kasza*



## A Parent's Prayer

**Anonymous**

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray my sanity to keep.  
For if some peace I do not find,  
I'm pretty sure I'll lose my mind.

I pray I find a little quiet,  
Far from the daily family riot.  
May I lie back and not have to think  
About what they're stuffing down the sink,

Or who they're with, or where they're at  
And what they're doing to the cat.  
I pray for time all to myself  
(did something just fall off a shelf?)

To cuddle in my nice, soft bed  
(Oh no, another goldfish--dead!)  
Some silent moments for goodness sake  
(Did I just hear a window break?)

And that I need not cook or clean  
(well heck, I've got the right to dream)  
Yes now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray my wits about me keep,

But as I look around I know,  
I must have lost them long ago!